

Introduction to the Middle Ages in Europe

432 ~ 1500



The Middle Ages: 476-1453

“The Medieval Period”



Beginning of Middle Ages

Western Roman Empire was overrun by Germanic groups with repeated invasions and constant warfare

- Breakdown of trade – Money was scarce and the Barter system was the main form of exchange
- Cities abandoned – Because of frequent raids, cities and towns were abandoned and most population remained in the countryside
- Rise Fortresses (castles) for protection against raids that led to development of a system called Feudalism
- Decline of Literacy – Priests and other church officials were the few that were literate; they kept whatever records, technology, and literature that survived from the Roman Empire

Comparison of Roman and Tribal Rule

Rome

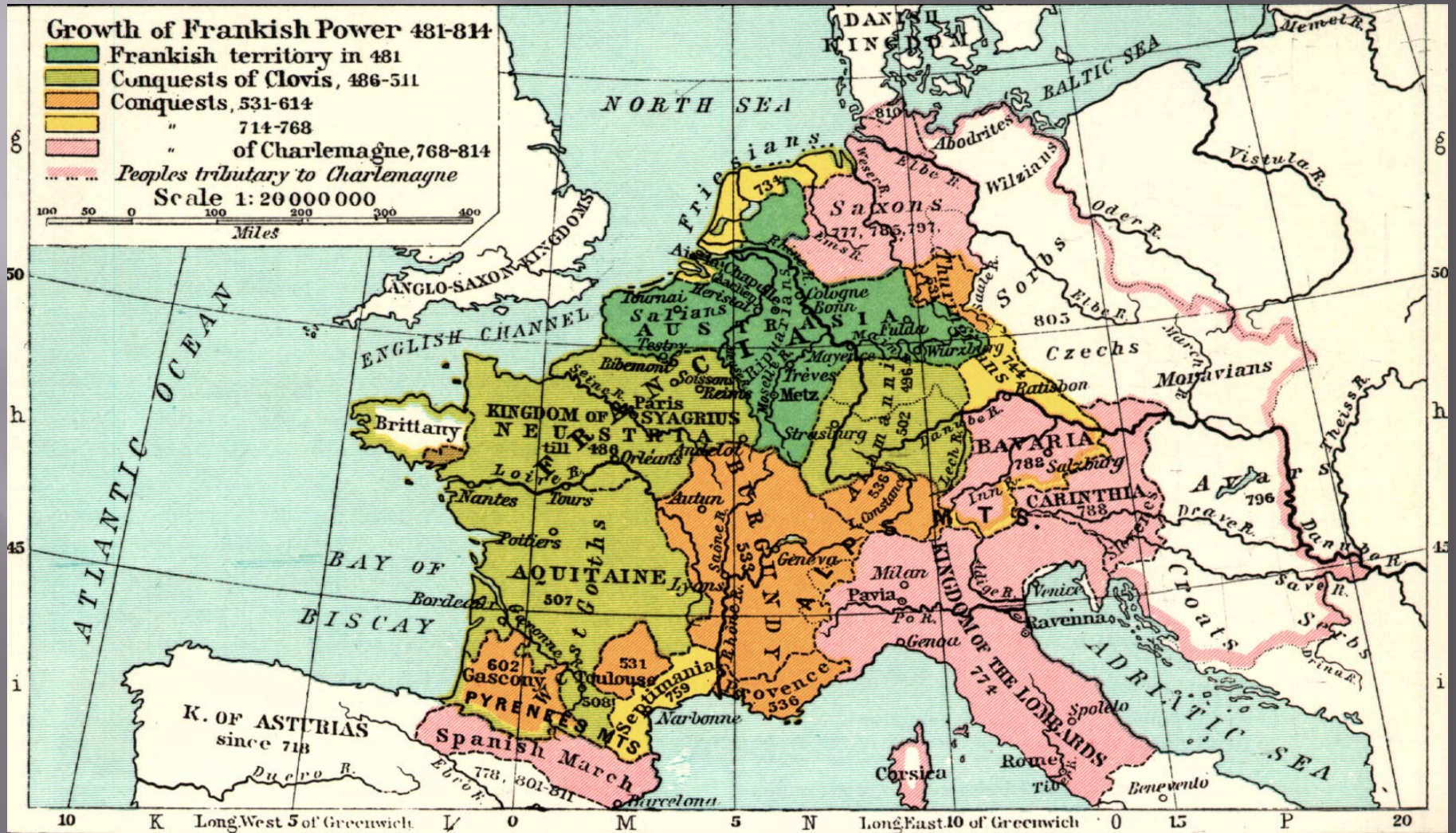
- Unified by loyalty to public government and formal written law
- Highly centralized and structured government with Emperor at top

Germanic Tribes

- Family ties and personal loyalty
- People lived in small communities governed by unwritten rules and traditions
- Ruled by a Chief who led a band of warriors loyal only to him
- Regularly at war with neighboring tribes for control of land or other scarce resources

First European Empire Evolves

After the decline of the Roman Empire small kingdoms sprang up all over Europe. The largest and the strongest was controlled by the ***Franks***





Merovingians



- ❑ Merovingian is derived from the name of an early leader of the tribe of Franks
- ❑ First dynasty after the Romans and ruled for 300 years
- ❑ Leader in 481 was **Clovis I** - he united Frankish tribes and expanded territory
- ❑ His conversion to Christianity won him support from the Church
- ❑ Clovis I wrote **Salic Law** - assigned a specific financial value to everyone and everything; concept of trial options (trial by oath and trial by ordeal)
- ❑ Merovingian leaders founded and built many monasteries, churches and palaces and spread Christianity throughout Western Europe
- ❑ Eventually dynasty declined as kings relaxed power and became more like figure heads whereas the real power lay with the powerful officials and leading aristocracy (nobles)
- ❑ **IMPACT:** Unification of tribes and rise of power of the Church

- Frankish Kingdom, 768
- Conquered by Charlemagne, to 814
- Tributary provinces
- Byzantine Empire
- Battle

0 150 300 miles
0 150 300 kilometers

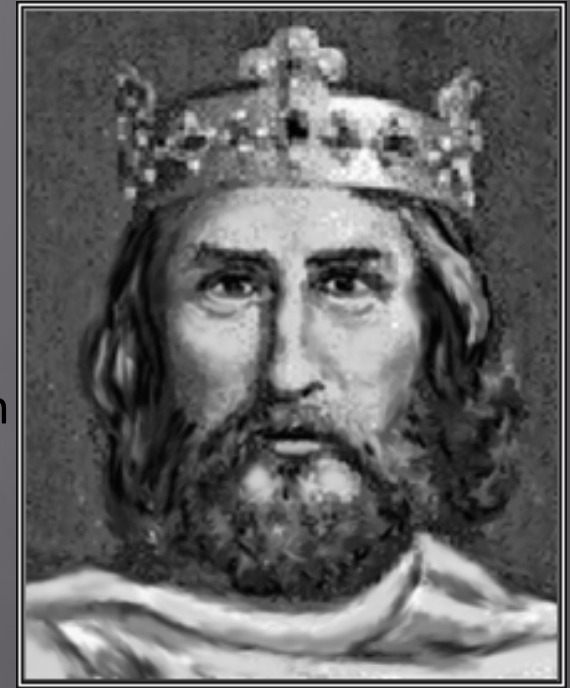


ATLANTIC OCEAN



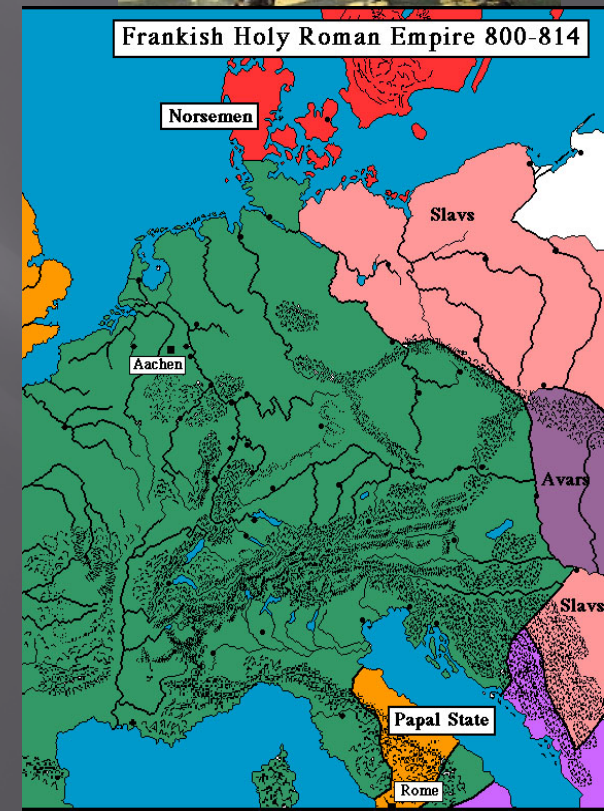
Carolingians

- ❑ Rise of aristocratic **Charles Martel** who dominated Frankish kingdom in 8th century
- ❑ He confiscated land given to Church and began Church reforms that would restore spirituality to clerical life
- ❑ His son **Pepin the Short** continued Church reforms and eventually with the support of reformed Church, removed last Merovingian king from throne
- ❑ Pepin established the Carolingian dynasty, protectors of the papacy and in return, gaining power and recognition from church
- ❑ Greatest legacy was Charles the Great, or **Charlemagne**



The Holy Roman Empire & Charlemagne


- ❑ Charlemagne (Charles the Great) who was a military general and restored Pope Leo III who had been exiled
- ❑ In return, Leo placed a crown on Charlemagne and named him the “Emperor of the Romans” which secured the relationship between Frankish kings and the papacy
- ❑ Charlemagne became the first ruler of the **Holy Roman Empire**, a dynasty that would last for more than 700 years
- ❑ Charlemagne- imposed order on empire through the Church and state
- ❑ Ordered the standardization of Latin, textbooks, manuals for preaching, schools for clergy and people, new form of handwriting
- ❑ All these promoted education and scholars and produced a precise written language (Latin)



Upon Charlemagne's Death...

- His son, Louis the Pious took over, but was a weak ruler
- When Louis died, the empire was divided among his three sons as a result of the **Treaty of Verdun**
- This division led to the basis of many modern European countries



 *The Division of Charlemagne's Empire. Internal tensions, dynastic competition, and external pressures led to the disintegration of Charlemagne's empire and the emergence of what would become France and Germany.*

Vikings Attack

Charlemagne's empire was broken up by his grandsons and was soon destroyed by invaders who would attack by sea, raid and plunder, then be quickly out to sea again.

- Vikings – Germanic people called Norsemen
- From Scandinavia
- Worshipped warlike gods
- Warriors, traders, farmers, and explorers

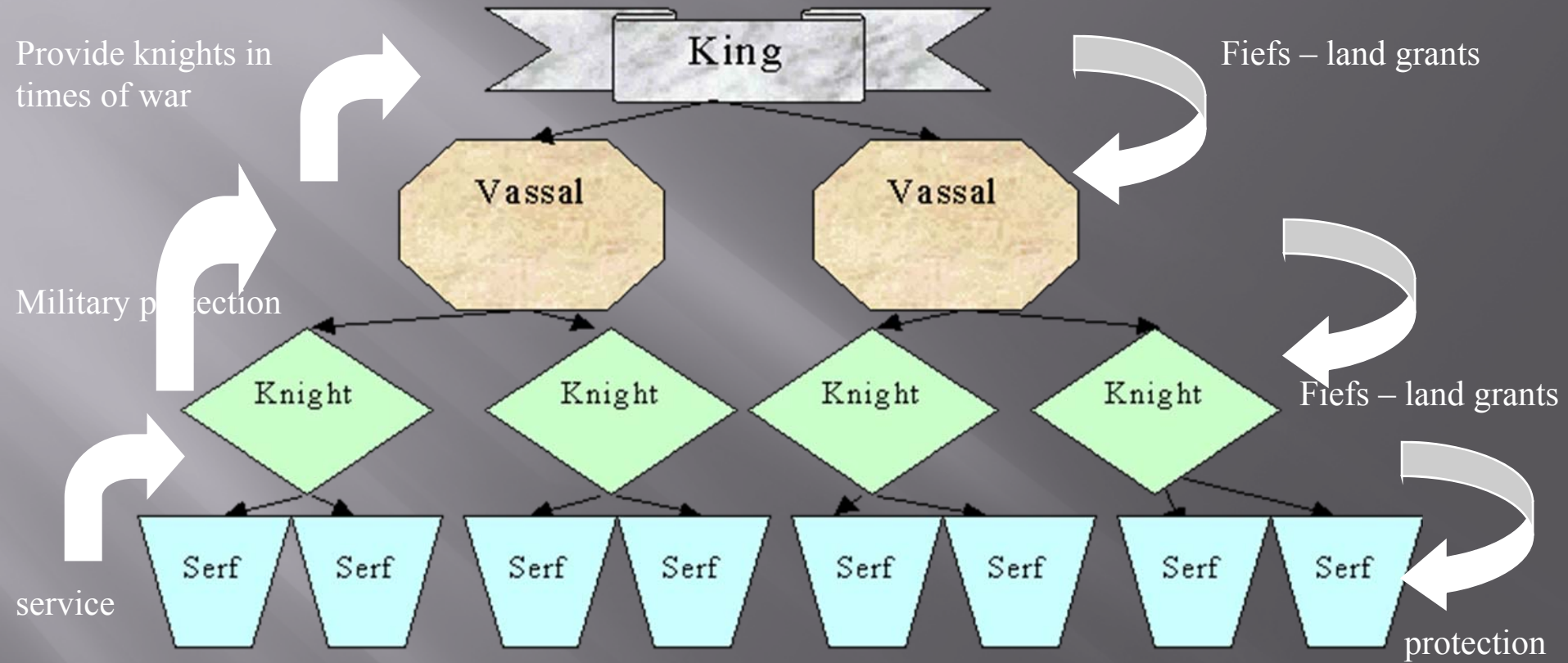


Feudalism



Think of a chess set

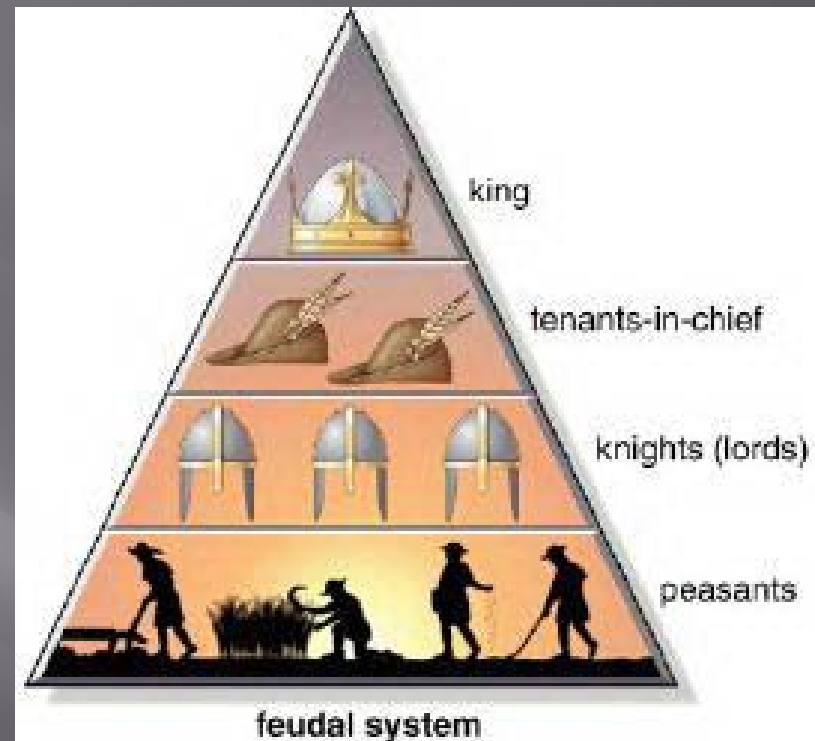
Feudalism



Based on mutual obligation

Feudalism

- ▣ Increasing violence and lawless countryside
- ▣ Weak turn to the strong for protection, strong want something from the weak
- ▣ Feudalism= relationship between those ranked in a chain of association (kings, vassals, lords, knights, serfs)
- ▣ Feudalism worked because of the notion of mutual obligation, or voluntary co-operation from serf to noble
- ▣ A man's word was the cornerstone of social life



Key terms

Fief = Land given by a lord in return for a vassal's military service and oath of loyalty

Serfs = Common peasants who worked the lords land

Tithe = Tax that serfs paid (tax or rent)

Corvee = Condition of unpaid labor by serfs (maintaining roads or ditches on a manor)

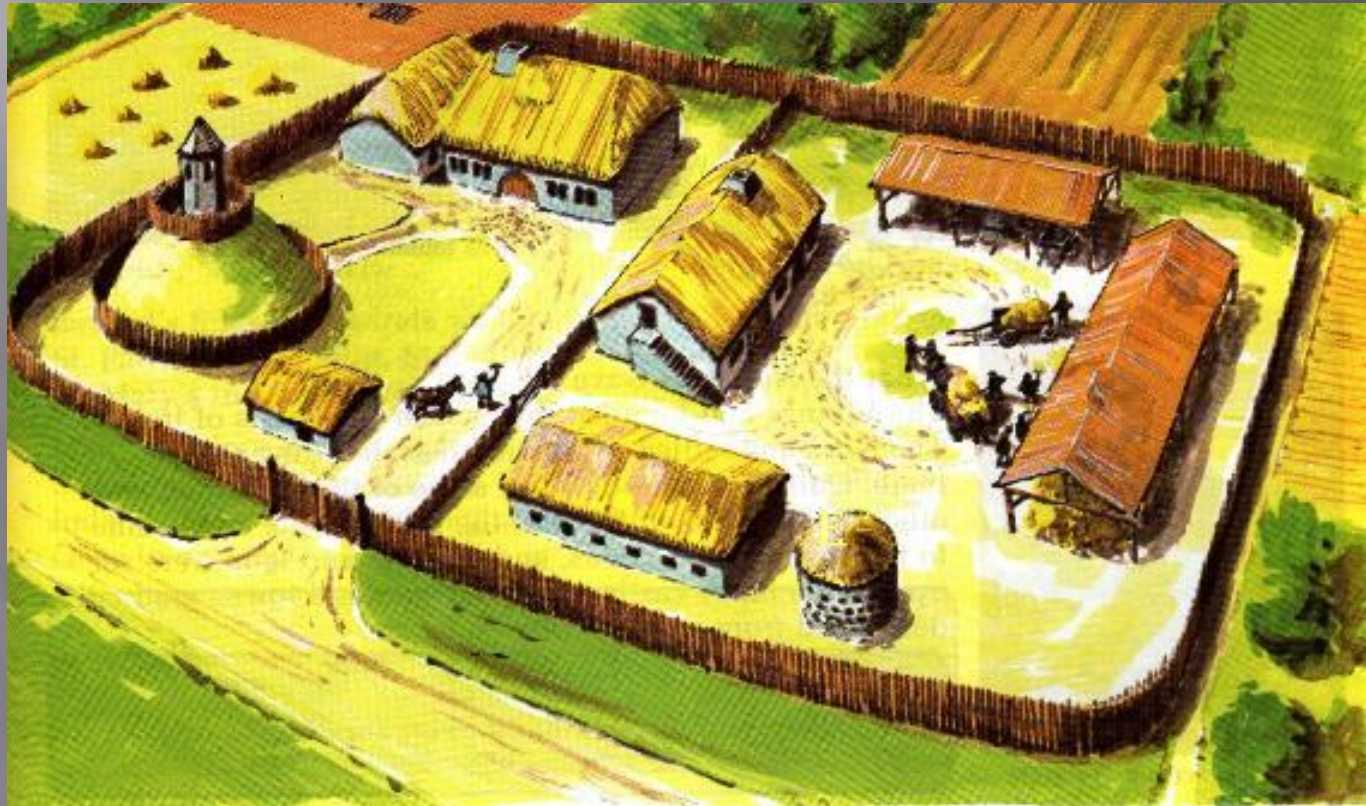
The Difference between Slaves and Serfs

- ▣ Slaves made up of conquered peoples
- ▣ Some treated harshly, while others were treated fairly
- ▣ Rural slaves became serfs, who worked the land and provided labor for owner (in return for protection)
- ▣ Set up for system of Feudalism

Feudalism: Manorial System

The Lord's Estate

- The lord provided the serfs with housing, farmland and protection
- Serfs tended the lands, cared for the animals, maintained the estate



Manors

- Peasants rarely traveled more than 25 miles from the manor
- Was home to 15 – 30 families
- Self-Sufficient community
- Peasants heavily taxed, including a tithe – a church tax of 1/10 their income



Feudalism and Chivalry

- ▣ Within Feudal system, the King, nobles, and knights were expected to follow a very specific code of behavior based on personal honor and courage
- ▣ That code was the Code of Chivalry
- ▣ Highlights of the code...



The Code of Chivalry

To live one's life so that it is worthy of respect and honor by

Fair Play

Never attack an unarmed foe.
Never charge an unhorsed opponent.
Never attack from behind.
Avoid cheating.
Avoid torture.

Nobility

Exhibit self discipline.
Show respect to authority.
Obey the law.
Administer Justice.
Protect the innocent.
Respect women.

Valor

Exhibit courage in word and deed.
Avenge the wronged.
Defend the weak and innocent.
Fight with honor.
Never abandon a friend, ally, or noble cause.

Honor

Always keep one's word.
Always maintain one's principles.
Never betray a confidence or comrade.
Avoid deception.
Respect life.

Courtesy

Exhibit manners.
Be polite and attentive.
Be respectful of host, authority, and women.

Loyalty

To God, Sovereign, Country, and the Code of Chivalry.

Code of Chivalry

- ▣ All men of “noble” blood were expected to follow this code
- ▣ The mythical Camelot of King Arthur and his knights are excellent examples of the code in action

Chivalry Activity

- ▣ What would a Code of Chivalry for 2009 contain?
- ▣ Develop your own code and be prepared to explain with class.



A violent society

- ❖ Noble's constantly fought each other
 - ❖ Defend estates
 - ❖ Seize new territories
 - ❖ Increase wealth
- ❖ Kept Europe fragmented
- ❖ Glorification of warriors

The Age of Chivalry

- ❖ The mounted Knights were the most important part of an Army
- ❖ Professional soldiers – main obligation was to serve in battle
 - ❖ Rewarded with land
 - ❖ Devoted lives to war



The Age of Chivalry

- ❖ Chivalry – a complex set of ideals, demanded that a knight fight bravely in defense of three masters
 1. His feudal lord
 2. His Heavenly Lord
 3. His Lady
- ❖ Meant to protect the weak and the poor
- ❖ Be loyal, brave, and courteous



The Age of Chivalry

Sons of nobles began training at an early age for knighthood

- ❖ Page – at 7 they were sent to another lord to be trained
- ❖ Squire – at 14 they act as a servant to a knight
- ❖ Knight- at 21 they become a knight and gain experience in local wars and tournaments



The Age of Chivalry

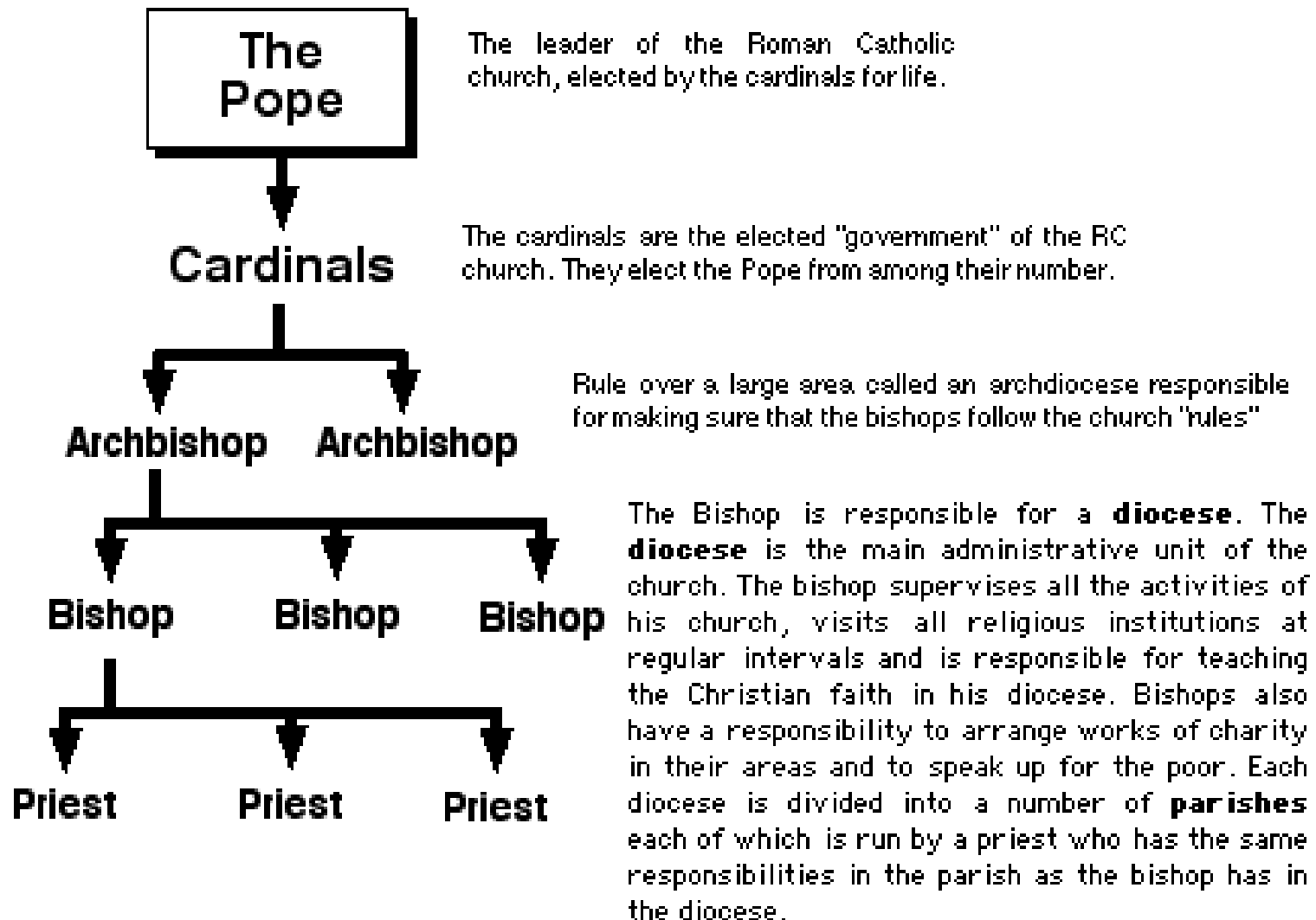
Tournaments – mock battles that combined recreation and combat training

Fierce and bloody competitions



The Clergy

Religious officials had different ranks within the church structure



Power of the Church

While the Roman Empire declined the Church remained

- Missionaries succeeded in spreading Christianity
- Adapted to rural conditions by building **monasteries – religious communities**
 - o Rules established by Benedict
 - o Became best educated communities
- Shared belief bonded the people together
- The Church served as a stable force as well as social center

Power of the Church

- Provided a unifying set of spiritual beliefs and rituals
- Created a system of justice to guide peoples conduct – **Cannon Law** – the law of the church
 - **Excommunication** – banishment from Church
 - **Interdict** – the denial of sacraments - important religious ceremonies (baptism, last rights)

High Middle Ages

1050 ~ 1300

Castles and Keeps

Stone castles were encircled by massive walls and guard towers

- ❖ Home to lord and lady, their family, knights soldiers, and servants
- ❖ A fortress of defense





Edinburgh

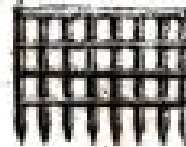




*Section of the Wall
of the Ballium*



Section & Plan of Machicolation.



*q
Horse*



*d
Perspective of
Machicolation.*



*h
Crenels and
Orills.*



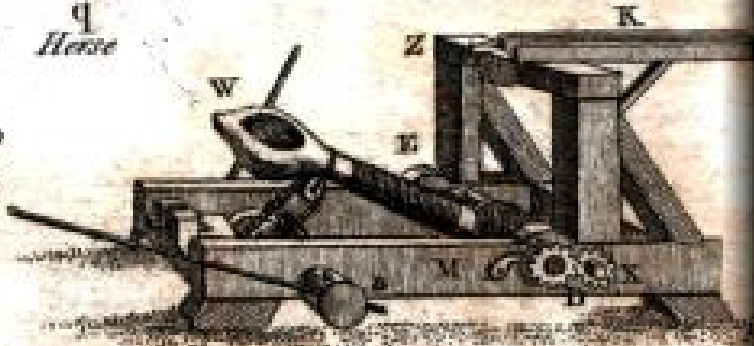
*Moveable Tower with Bridge
and Battering Ram.*



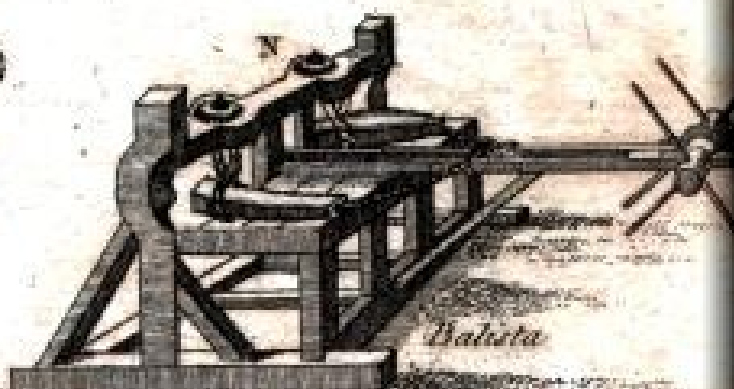
sow



*cat
Catrus*



Catapulta

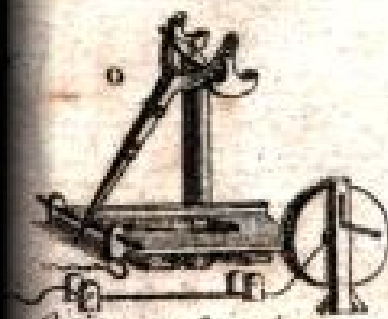


Balesta



Darts for the Balesta.

Winch for Bending the Balesta.



Onager or Scorpion

MACHINES OF WAR.

High Middle Ages

By the end of the High Middle Ages

- Western European nations gained much of the shape by which we know them today
- They became more stable and began concentrating on establishing stronger political structures

Late Middle Ages

1300 ~ 1527

5 major developments of the Late Middle Ages

1) The Hundred Years War

- Fought between the French and English for the French throne
- Massively destructive
 - Gun powder and heavy artillery



2) The Papal Schism

- 3 popes
- Loss of respectability due to political involvements

3) The Fall of the Byzantine Empire

- Turks begin assault on Western borders

4) Famines

- Climate became colder and rainier
- Harvests shrank
- Population doubled
- Move back to towns

5) Black Death

- The Bubonic Plague
- killed $\frac{1}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ of European population

Birth of Modern Languages

- ▣ Development of Middle Ages
- ▣ New languages born through migration, resettlement, conflict and changes
- ▣ Old English (Anglo Saxon) began to incorporate words borrowed from Latin and Old French, Old German and Old Norse
- ▣ Roots of contemporary Spanish, Italian and other Romance languages

